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ABSTRACT

In fall 1986, the San Diego Community College District initiated a pilot project to develop and offer an honors curriculum. After the first semester, during which 11 courses were offered to 110 students, an evaluation was conducted, consisting of the development of a profile of participants, a survey of students who withdrew from the program, and course evaluations by faculty and students. The evaluation revealed that: (1) of the 110 students who originally enrolled in the honors program, 32% withdrew; (2) 95% were enrolled in only one honors course; (3) more than 50% of the students were over 29 years old; (4) minorities were underrepresented in the honors program; (5) the majority of the students who dropped out of the program cited conflicts with their work schedule or a heavy workload as the reasons; (6) half of the students who dropped out of the program had never attended a class; (7) 64.4% of the honors students felt that the course required more class participation and 83.3% felt it had higher standards of performance than regular courses; (8) faculty indicated that the academic performance of honors students was considerably higher than that of regular students; and (9) methods used to teach the honors courses varied, though lectures, class discussions, and oral presentations were common. Survey instruments are appended. (AYC)

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HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION

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Fall, 1986

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HONORS
PROGRAM
EVALUATION

Fall 1986

Prepared by: Research & Planning
Fall 1986

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HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION

Introduction

On May 14, 1986, the Board of Trustees approved the development of an Honors Pilot Program in the San Diego Community College District to address the needs of highly-motivated students. The Honors Pilot Program began Fall 1986 with eleven courses and 110 students.

All hourly and contract faculty in the District were invited to submit a proposal for the development and delivery of an Honors course. The Honors committee, consisting of faculty representatives from each of the colleges, reviewed the proposals and selected the Honors courses for the Fall semester. A total of twenty-three proposals were submitted and eleven were selected. The committee made every effort to choose a variety of courses for each college that were different from the regular curriculum in terms of delivery as well as content.

An evaluation plan was an integral part of the Honors Pilot. The evaluation design consisted of four components.

1. A profile questionnaire of all participants.
2. A survey of all students who dropped or withdrew.
3. A student evaluation of each course.
4. A faculty evaluation of each course.

This report discusses these data obtained from faculty and students the first semester of the pilot program. Similar data will be gathered for the Spring 1987 semester and reported at a later date.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile

A questionnaire was distributed in the classroom during the first two weeks of the semester. All students were asked to complete the profile questionnaire (Refer to Appendix A). The instrument was designed to obtain a demographic and educational profile of the Honors students. These data would be a valuable recruiting source for the program as well as allow for evaluation of the Honors student cohort in relation to the total student population. A summary of the data follows.

Originally, 110 students enrolled in the Honors Program, Fall 1986. As was expected, there were some problems with enrolling eligible students in Honors courses the first semester. Many students enrolled in Honors courses without the appropriate criteria for participation in the program and were not allowed to remain. As a result, the retention rate was low (68%). There were 74 students who completed the program the first semester. It should be noted that Spring 1987, 85% of the students had remained in the program as of the first census date.

Approximately 95% of the Honors students were enrolled in only one Honors course. Only 3 students were enrolled in two Honors courses.

Demographics

AGE

The age distribution of the Honors students was considerably different from the general student population. More than 50% of the students in the Honors Program were at least 30 years old and more than

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Demographics (cont)

AGE (cont)

75% were at least 23 years old. Comparatively, 35% of the total student population Fall 1986 was 30 years and older and almost 65% of the group was at least 23 years of age. Nonetheless, the distribution of age in the Honors classes is consistent with previous data obtained for the Honors Program. In a survey of potential Honors students conducted Spring 1986, the results showed that of those students who specified an interest in Honors classes, there was an over-representation of students over the age of 30.

The age distribution of Honors students and of the total student population are illustrated below.

		Fall 1986	Fall 1986
		Honors Students	Total Student Population
Age	18	9.6%	7.5%
	19	8.2%	6.6%
	20	4.1%	6.5%
	21	2.7%	6.0%
	22	0 .	5.7%
	23	5.5%	5.3%
	24	2.7%	4.8%
	25-29	16.4%	19.7%
	30-34	13.7%	13.3%
Over	34	37.0%	21.7%

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Demographics (cont)

GENDER

The distribution of males and females in the Honors Program was also considerably different than the distribution of the general population in the District. More than 75% of the students enrolled in Honors classes were female. Comparatively, 51% of all students enrolled Fall 1986 were women. These data are illustrated below.

	Fall 1986 Honors Students	Fall 1986 Total Student Population
Male	22.9%	48.5%
Female	77.1%	51.3%

A detailed review of enrollment in each of the Honors courses shows a particularly high proportion of women in several of the classes. For example, enrollment in two Child Development courses, which comprised 12.5% of the total enrollment in the program, was exclusively female. Further, a Science course was 83% female, an Art course was 80%, and enrollment in a Psychology course was 85.7% women.

Although the gender distribution in the Honors Program was not reflective of the general student population in the District, it was consistent with data obtained in a survey of potential Honors students Spring 1986. The survey indicated that females represented almost 60% of students with a GPA of 3.5 or

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Demographics (cont)

GENDER (cont)

greater in nine or more units, and females comprised 60% of the group of survey respondents. Thus, previous research concluded that females were more likely to participate in the Honors Program than males.

ETHNICITY

The ethnic distribution of the Honors students was somewhat different than the general student population. Asian students, who represented 7% of the student population in the District Fall 1986, were not represented in the Honors Program. In addition, Black students comprised 5.5% of the Honors program compared to 9.2% of the student body. Hispanics were proportionally represented and Filipinos slightly underrepresented. It should be noted that a high proportion (15%) of Honors students specified the "other" category, some of which may actually represent the under-represented groups. The distribution is illustrated below.

	Fall 1986 Honors Students	Fall 1986 Total Student Population
American Indian	0	1.3%
Asian	0	7.8%
Black	5.5%	9.2%
Caucasian	64.4%	63.9%
Filipino	2.8%	4.4%
Hispanic	9.6%	9.9%
Other	15.1%	2.2%

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Demographics (cont)

ETHNICITY (cont)

An analysis of the ethnic distribution by college shows somewhat different results. For example, at City College, Black students comprised a significantly larger proportion of the Honors Program (30.8%) than their representation in the student body (19.3%); Caucasian students were under-represented in the Honors Program (30.8%) compared to the student population (47.9%); and, Hispanics and Filipinos were fairly representative. At Mesa College, Black students were not enrolled in any Honors classes, yet they represented almost 4% of the student body. The distribution of other ethnic groups in the Honors Program at Mesa College was fairly consistent with the general student population. Miramar College showed the least variation in ethnic distribution. The only notable difference was in the Filipino population which was over-represented in the Honors courses at Miramar. It should be noted that the absence of Asian students in the Honors Program was not reflective of any of the colleges.

Workload

A comparison of the workload of the Honors students with the workload of students in the general population Fall 1986, reveals the fact that as a group the Honors students were enrolled in more units. For example, almost 50% of the Honors students were enrolled in at least 12 units compared to 27% of the general student body. Further, 63% of the Honors Program was enrolled in 9 or

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Workload (cont)

more units compared to 42% of the general population. The distribution of workload in the Honors Program suggests that the Honors students tend to carry more units than the norm. A distribution of workload is illustrated below.

<u>Units</u>	Fall 1986	Fall 1986
	Honors Students	Total Student Population
Less than 3	0	7.0%
3-5	16.4%	30.8%
6-8	21.0%	20.0%
9-11	16.4%	15.2%
12 or more	46.6%	27.1%

Note: Only three students were concurrently enrolled in two Honors courses.

Educational Background

Approximately 60% of the Honors students had previous college experience with an average of 2.3 years of college per student. However, students in English 101 and History 109 had notably less overall college experience. In the history class for example, three of the four students were first-time students. This may be primarily due to the fact that both of these courses were General Education and usually taken earlier in the college career than some of the other seminar classes that were offered.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Educational Background (cont)

More than 25% of the Honors students had a college degree. Eleven percent (11%) held Bachelors degrees or higher and 14% had Associate degrees. For the most part, the students with degrees were evenly distributed in the program, with the exception of the English course which did not have any students with a degree. It should also be noted that the English course had the youngest group of students, 85% of which were first-time college students.

Almost 90% of the Honors students were enrolled in at least one other college class. The average workload was 10.2 hours per student and more than 46% were enrolled in 12 units or more. In addition, almost one third of the Honors students had participated in an Honors program in high school.

Educational Goal

The students were asked if the Honors Program was a reason for enrolling at this college. Overall, 16.4% indicated that the Honors Program was a reason for enrolling. Further, in the Business class, more than 50% of the students indicated that Honors was a reason for enrolling.

For the most part, the reasons that were stated for enrolling in Honors courses were individual and in some cases, specific to a course. A sample of some of the general responses includes:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| o personal growth | o the instructor |
| o interest in the subject | o small class size |
| o academic challenge | o opportunity for more intense study |
| o to better the chances of transfer | o looks good on a transcript |

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Educational Goal (cont)

Refer to Appendix B for a complete listing of reasons for enrolling in Honors courses.

When asked for goals for the Honors courses, the responses were again specific to each course. The general theme of the students' goals was the development of a more thorough understanding of specific aspects of the subject area. In addition, several general comments were stated including:

- o to become more proficient in research
- o to learn more than I would in a regular class
- o to improve my writing skills

Refer to Appendix C for a complete listing of goals for the Honors courses.

The students were asked to state their educational objective for the next two years. Almost 60% of the students intended to transfer to a 4-year institution, 16% planned to obtain a Masters degree, and 15% planned to continue taking classes for self-improvement. An additional 6% were not sure what their goals were and 4% stated an Associate degree.

When asked for their long-term educational goals, the Honors students responded enthusiastically. The response suggests that the Honors students are very motivated. Almost 85% of the group were planning to obtain at least a four-year degree and almost 50% were planning to continue beyond a four-year degree. The results can be found on the following page.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Educational Goal (cont)

Long-Term Educational Goal
Fall 1986
Honors Students

Associate Degree	1.4%	Ph.D.	11.0%
Bachelors Degree	28.8%	Law School	2.7%
Teaching Credential	6.8%	Self Improvement	5.5%
Masters Degree	35.6%	Unsure	8.2%

Employment Status

A review of the employment status of the Honors students shows that 20.5% of the students were employed full-time, 37% part-time, and 42.5% were not employed. The nature of employment of the students who were employed varied considerably and certain courses attracted occupations specific to the subject area. For example, in the Child Development courses, there were pre-school teachers, a child development specialist and a teacher's aide. In the Art course there was an art illustrator as well as a ceramics sculpturer. In the Fire Science course, there were two fire fighters. In the remaining classes, the occupations varied throughout the program and included laborers, teachers, secretaries, clerks, waiters and salespersons.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Recruitment

The students were asked how they heard about the Honors Program. Almost 50% of the students were recruited by faculty, the majority of which were recruited by the instructor of the particular Honors course. The second largest recruiting tool was the schedule of classes as more than 20% of the students "found out about" the Honors Program in the class schedule. Approximately 10% of the students were recruited from a brochure and the remaining students were recruited from a variety of sources including friends and family.

Performance

The overall cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of the Honors students was 3.64 (self-reported). Comparatively, the overall GPA for the District was 2.88, Fall 1985. In addition, the cumulative GPA for female Honors students was higher (3.69) than it was for males (3.47). The cumulative GPA is fairly reflective of the potential of these students as more than half of the Honors students had completed more than fifty college credits and almost 20% had completed more than one hundred credits.

Majors

A review of the majors of the Honors students suggests that certain types of courses appeal specifically to students in the major such as Art, Business and Child Development. The majority of the students in these courses were

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Profile (cont)

Majors (cont)

majoring in the subject. Other classes such as History, Psychology and English appear to attract a variety of majors. The most common majors were Business, Child Development and Psychology. A listing of majors of the Honors students follows:

Biogenetics	Linguistics
Biology	Marine Biology
Business	Mechanical Engineering
Chemistry	Philosophy
Child Development	Photography
Education	Political Science
Engineering	Psychology
English	Selected Studies
Fine Arts	Social Sciences
Fire Science	Spanish
History	Visual Arts
Liberal Arts	

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Retention

It is difficult to determine an accurate retention rate for the Honors Program Fall 1986, due to some clerical problems during enrollment. Several students were allowed to enroll in Honors courses without the proper pre-requisites and thus had to drop. Consequently, the retention rate for Honors courses is not reflective of the actual retention of Honors students for the Fall semester. Of the 110 students who enrolled in an Honors course Fall 1986, 74 completed the course which equates to a drop rate of 32%. Comparatively, the overall drop rate for the District for Fall 1986 was 40%.

A telephone survey was conducted of all of the students who dropped or withdrew from an Honors course. Thirty-three (33) students were telephoned and 20 were successfully contacted. Attempts were made to contact the students at least four times, including evenings and weekends. The most common reason for not successfully contacting the students was a bad telephone number or simply that they could not be reached. The students were asked two brief questions as well as some demographic questions.

The results show that the majority of students dropped their Honors course because it conflicted with their work schedule or because of a heavy workload. Another large group stated personal reasons and a small number specified problems with the course/instructor. Comments included "not compatible with my work schedule," "realized after first meeting that the course would require too much work," and "did not need the class to graduate." Unfortunately, the response to the telephone survey did not allow for a more accurate assessment of the retention rate, as only two students indicated inappropriate placement as a reason for dropping and 30% could not be contacted.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Retention (cont)

The students were also asked if they were satisfied with the course. Ten (50%) of the students had attended at least one class meeting prior to dropping. Only one of those students who had attended at least once class meeting was not satisfied with the course/instructor. The others were very satisfied with the classes. The students praised the instructors and felt the course format and content were exciting.

The characteristics of students who dropped Honors courses were compared with the characteristics of all of the Honors students. The results showed that a proportionally higher percentage of men dropped compared to the proportion of men completing the program. In addition, more than 50% of those that dropped were under 25 years of age compared to 33% of the total program who were in the "under 25" age category. Further, the ethnic distribution of the students who dropped Honors courses was different than the distribution of all Honors students. For example, 15% of the students who dropped were Hispanic compared to 10% of the Honors population. In addition, none of the students who dropped were Black, yet almost 6% of the Honors Program were Black students. A demographic distribution of both groups is illustrated on the following page.

Student retention in Honors courses should be carefully tracked and evaluated each semester to determine the relationship between attrition and various criteria such as GPA, major and type of course. Student retention is a major component of a successful Honors Program and thus should be the focus of on-going planning efforts.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Retention (cont)

Demographics

	Honors Students Who Dropped	All Honors Students
<u>Age</u>		
18	0	9.6%
19	10.0%	8.2%
20	5.0%	4.1%
21	0	2.7%
22	10.0%	0
23	5.0%	5.5%
24	20.0%	2.7%
25-29	10.0%	16.4%
30-34	10.0%	13.7%
Over 34	30.0%	37.0%
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	39.4%	22.9%
Female	60.6%	77.1%
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
Asian	0	0
Black	0	5.7%
Caucasian	75.0%	65.7%
Hispanic	15.0%	10.0%
Filipino	5.0%	2.9%
Other	5.0%	15.7%

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation

The Honors students were asked to evaluate each course at the end of the Fall semester by completing a brief questionnaire. Refer to Appendix D for an example of the Student Evaluation Survey. Seventy-three (73) students completed the evaluation. The overall results confirm the expectations of the students as stated in their "profile" questionnaire completed at the beginning of the semester. The students were highly motivated and enjoyed the challenging and intellectually stimulating environment of these courses.

The questions will be discussed individually.

Question 1

In your opinion, what specific characteristics made this Honors course different from other courses you have taken?

Generally, the comments made by Honors students indicated that personalized and self-paced instruction, intellectual stimulation, and challenge were some of the characteristics that made the Honors courses different. Additional responses to this question included:

- . Close interaction with the teacher.
- . Working independently allowed me to set personal goals and to take responsibility for achieving them.
- . Receiving expert help.
- . Small class.
- . Opportunity for oral presentations and broader range of subjects.
- . Active participation by all members of the class.
- . In-depth learning.
- . Fast-moving pace.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 1 (cont)

- . Outstanding instructor, very objective in presenting diverse points of view.
- . Guest speakers and research papers.
- . Structured specific subject allowed for more intense discussions.
- . Different approaches in teaching.
- . More demanding in terms of reading and preparation.
- . Professor's capability and fascination with the course.

Question 2

Did this Honors course require more class participation than regular courses?

64.4% Yes
32.9% No
2.7% No Response

Approximately 64.4% of the students stated that the Honors courses required more participation than other courses. Further analysis shows that more than 72% of those who did not feel the Honors course required more participation were enrolled in Independent Study courses in which students have very little interaction. Comparatively, the students enrolled in "seminar" classes almost unanimously felt that more participation was required.

Question 3

Did this course meet your expectations? Why?

84.7% Yes
5.6% No
2.8% Not Sure
6.9% No Response

With the exception of one course, the students unanimously felt that their expectations were met. Comments included:

- . The coursework pushed me to reach my potential.
- . Highly interesting subject taught by an instructor who obviously knew the subject well.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 3 (cont)

- . I was challenged to formulate or change my opinions about subjects I would rather not think about.
- . I learned more than I ever expected.
- . The class offered a challenging and stimulating environment.
- . No other class has offered me the same level of intellectual stimulation.
- . Class exceeded my expectations.

All of the students who responded negatively were from the same class.
Comments from these students included:

- . Too vague.
- . Did not stimulate the students.
- . Class too small, therefore not a lot of interaction/discussion.

Question 4

Did this Honors course require higher standards of performance from the students than what you have previously experienced at a community college?

<u>83.3%</u>	Yes
<u>9.7%</u>	No
<u>7.0%</u>	No Response

Only 9.7% of the students did not feel higher standards were required in the Honors courses and these students were distributed among the various courses. It should be noted that several of the students who responded negatively had a Bachelor's degree and thus may have been comparing their Honors course to more advanced work completed for their Bachelor's degree.

Question 5

Do you feel the class size was adequate? If not, what would you recommend?

<u>82.2%</u>	Yes
<u>11.0%</u>	No
<u>6.8%</u>	No Response

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 5 (cont)

Almost 85% of the students felt that the class size was adequate. However, there were several recommendations for slightly larger classes. For example,

English 101	8-10 students
	10-15 students
Business 265	15-20 students

The students most dissatisfied with class size were those in the History course. The students felt that the class (4 students) was too small for extensive discussion. Further analysis shows that the History instructor also stated in his evaluation of the course that the class size was too small. He indicated that the small class was very difficult to teach.

Question 6

How would you describe the students level of involvement in this course?

<u>74.2%</u>	Very Involved
<u>5.6%</u>	Involved
<u>16.3%</u>	Moderately Involved
<u>2.8%</u>	Not Involved
<u>1.1%</u>	No Response

Almost 80% of the students rated the level of involvement in the Honors courses as involved to very involved. It should be noted that 85% of the students who rated the level of involvement as "not involved" or "moderately involved" were from the same class.

Question 7

If you are taking more than one Honors course, did you find them to be approximately equivalent in terms of quality? In terms of demand?

Only three of the 74 students were enrolled in more than one Honors course. Two students found their two Honors courses not to be equivalent in terms of quality and demand, and one student found his/her two Honors courses equivalent.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 8

Do you have any comments about the grading procedures and tests?

Approximately 40% of the students expressed comments about grading procedures and tests. For the most part, the comments concerning the grading procedures varied. The general theme of the comments was that the procedures were equitable and excellent. The majority of students emphasized their appreciation for not being graded on test results but rather on research papers, oral presentations and class participation. Comments included:

- . In such a course, tests are not appropriate.
- . Objective tests test memory - not understanding.
- . Grading procedure unclear.
- . Participation and contribution were the focus. That is much better than in a regular class, where there are usually only tests.
- . We were all above average students and didn't have to worry about tests. We were all there to learn.
- . Fewer tests made the learning more pleasurable.

Question 9

Do you have any comments about the reading/writing assignments required for this course?

More than 70% of the students commented on the required reading/writing assignments. With the exception of one course, the comments were generally positive. Further analysis suggests that the negative feelings in the one course were a result of a difference in expectations of the students and instructor. Comments from these students included such statements as, "the assignments were unclear and irrelevant," and "writing assignments were often confusing and unclear." It should be noted that the instructor commented that she assumed the students would have better writing skills than they did.

Overall, the Honors students found the assignments challenging and appropriate for an Honors class. Some students made suggestions for improvement. A summary of some of the comments follows.

- . Adequate, challenging and rewarding.
- . Change the textbook.
- . Term paper enhanced my comprehension of the subject.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 9 (cont)

- . Assignments were interesting and stimulating.
- . The assignments made the course superior to an ordinary class.
- . The assignments were irrelevant.
- . Everything was perfect.
- . More reading is needed.
- . Assignments were a major challenge.

Refer to Appendix E for a complete listing of comments to this question.

Question 10

Do you think this course should be offered again? Please explain.

The Honors students were very enthusiastic about their courses. Overall, they found the courses intellectually stimulating and almost unanimously recommended that the courses be repeated. Each course catered to specific interests and a variety of different needs of the students. The students comments were generally specific to each course. Refer to Appendix F for a complete listing of comments.

Question 11

Would you recommend this course to other high-achieving students?

<u>58.3%</u>	Highly Recommend
<u>33.0%</u>	Yes
<u>5.6%</u>	Yes, with reservations
<u>1.4%</u>	No
<u>1.4%</u>	No Response

More than 90% of the students indicated that they would recommend their Honors course to other students. A review of the comments supports the overall enthusiasm for the program. Some examples are as follows:

- . I enjoyed this course more than any other I have ever taken.
- . An excellent program for students seeking more challenge.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 11 (cont)

Further analysis shows that all of the students who responded "Yes, with reservations" and "No" were from one class. Comments from these students expressed disappointment with the course such as:

- . Making a choice for the student diminishes the student's incentive to perform. Topics for major papers should be left up to the student.
- . More communication between faculty and students is needed. More time to read reserve material and clearer explanations on how such material is to be used is also needed.

Question 12

Are there other Honors courses you would like to see offered? Please specify.

The students expressed a variety of courses they would like to see offered by the Honors Program. The listing is below.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| . Art | (ceramics, photography, drawing) |
| . Anthropology | |
| . Biology | (genetics, cell biology) |
| . Business | (accounting, financing, marketing) |
| . Child Development | (children's literature, gifted children, psycho-social) |
| . Computer Science | |
| . English | (literature, special subjects) |
| . Economics | |
| . Food Catering | |
| . History | (communism, Vietnamese culture, foreign policy) |
| . Journalism | |
| . Japanese | (interpretation of Japanese culture) |
| . Language | |
| . Mathematics | |
| . Nutrition | |
| . Physical Science | |
| . Physics | |
| . Political Science | |
| . Psychology | |
| . Sociology | |
| . Spanish | |
| . Television | (evaluation of television shows) |

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Student Evaluation (cont)

Question 13

Do you have any additional comments/suggestions?

The Honors students had many comments/suggestions. A list follows.

- . Honors classes allow the student to really get involved.
- . Honors classes stimulate personal growth and allow for participation.
- . An excellent program for students seeking more challenging classes than usually offered at a junior college.
- . Keep the program!
- . I would like to see more Honors classes in Business.
- . Everyone got involved and put forth a tremendous amount of effort.
- . I enjoyed the guest speakers.
- . Keep the classes small.
- . Helpful in increasing communication skills.
- . Need a teacher more "in touch" with the students. There is a lot of disappointment and hostility toward the teacher from the students.
- . Not enough enthusiasm in class discussions.
- . I am very happy to see the community college district offer courses that would qualify as upper division courses at a university.
- . I enjoyed this course more than any I have ever taken.
- . The instructor is to be commended for his expertise, as well as for a highly-skilled presentation and diligent preparation. Outstanding!
- . Offer MAC Honors courses. I think Honors students would prefer an accelerated and intense 6-week class over an 18-week class.
- . The instructor was very dedicated.
- . The Spanish department tends to emphasize Spanish culture; the Mexican/Chicano culture of the Southwest also needs to be appreciated. The course was refreshing.
- . It was a rewarding experience that created an unusual bond between the students and the instructor.
- . We all felt a responsibility to the program and felt good about being invited to participate.
- . It would be interesting to do the art work the first semester, refine it the following semester, and then get more involved in contacting the press and setting the show up.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Faculty Evaluation

At the end of the semester, a questionnaire was distributed to each faculty member teaching an Honors course. Refer to Appendix G for an example of the Faculty Evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to evaluate various aspects of the Honors courses. A review of the data concludes that the instructors were very satisfied with the Honors courses. According to the faculty, the general performance of the Honors students was considerably higher than that of students enrolled in regular classes. Several instructors indicated that they had adjusted their normal grading procedures for the course. Overall, the instructors required more reading and writing, expected greater effort in terms of quality and quantity, and demanded more extensive research and analysis.

A review of the grade distribution of the Fall 1986 Honors students illustrates the calibre of the program. Almost 90% of the students received an "A" or "B" in the course and an overwhelming majority of students received an "A." Only one student failed the course and according to the instructor, the "F" was given by default as the student stopped attending class late in the semester. The grade distribution is illustrated below.

<u>Honors Program</u> <u>Grade Distribution</u>	
Grade A	74.0%
B	13.7%
C	2.8%
D	0
F	1.4%
I	8.2%

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Faculty Evaluation (cont)

The methods used to teach the Honors courses varied. However, lectures, class discussions and oral presentations were common among all courses. Other techniques included video presentations, field trips, guest speakers, hands-on application and directed research. One class was an internship where students worked with county librarians. The instructors unanimously agreed that their teaching methods for the Honors courses differed from the normal teaching methodology. They concluded that more emphasis was placed on research papers and independent study, as well as providing more personal attention to each student.

When asked to evaluate the students' performance, all of the instructors agreed that the performance of the Honors students was better or much better than "regular" students. Further, the instructors felt the criteria for eligibility (3.25 GPA in 9 or more units) was appropriate. One instructor did suggest however, that the instructors be given more discretion in eligibility determination.

In general, the instructors felt that the students met their expectations, commenting that the students were very motivated and enthusiastic, demonstrated positive attitudes, and were dedicated. When asked if the students met their expectations, only one instructor responded negatively. Further analysis shows that the students in that particular class also did not feel their expectations were met. Judging by the responses of both the students and instructor, there appeared to be a communication problem.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Faculty Evaluation (cont)

The faculty were asked if they would do anything differently next time they taught an Honors course. Although the faculty indicated that the format of the course should stay the same, nearly all of the instructors would make some changes. These changes varied with each individual. For example:

- o I would require more written composition for Chicano students
- o I would put more emphasis on pre-1945 Vietnam History
- o I would encourage more interaction
- o I would like to have support from the Art Gallery staff
- o I would try to meet more frequently
- o I would not teach a class unless there was a minimum of ten students

The questionnaire also asked the faculty to describe the requirements for the course. As with teaching methodology, the requirements varied with each course. Examples of requirements included research papers, oral presentations, gallery presentations, a student journal, exams, and class participation. Refer to Appendix H for a description of the course requirements for each class.

Overall, the faculty who participated in the first phase of the Honors pilot were very impressed with the program, confirming the original intent of the project "a way to motivate, reward and challenge the better and brighter students."

The faculty presented a variety of recommendations on how to improve the administration of the program. The districtwide Honors Committee should give these suggestions serious consideration for future semesters. Recommendations are included on the following page.

HONORS PROGRAM EVALUATION (cont)

Faculty Evaluation (cont)

- o have more contact with faculty; visit classes
- o give phones to Honors faculty; difficult to contact guest speakers and students
- o create a smoother budgetary system
- o earlier notification of acceptance of proposal
- o have local campus administer funds
- o districtwide announcement of Honors Program, guest speakers and other activities
- o develop a core curriculum for this type of course (History 109)

The evaluation of the first semester of the Honors Program indicates that the program was a tremendous success. The students were almost unanimously satisfied with their Honors courses, stating that the program exceeded their expectations. The Honors faculty were also very satisfied with the program indicating that the overall performance in the Honors courses was higher than student performance in other courses. Several suggestions to improve the program were offered by students and faculty and should be carefully reviewed in the planning process for future semesters.

The data clearly suggest that the program is a vital component of the college curriculum and should be enhanced further.

Appendices

Appendix A

Dear Student:

This is the first year of the Honors Program at City, Mesa and Miramar Colleges. Since this is a pilot project, it is very important that we evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the program and develop a profile of honors students. We need your cooperation in assisting us to collect the appropriate information throughout the semester. Please take a minute to complete the questionnaire below. The information will remain **confidential** and will be reported in summary form only.

Thank you.

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ College: _____
Address: _____ I.D. _____
_____ Telephone: _____

1. How long have you attended this college? _____
2. Have you attended college prior to attending this college? Yes _____ No _____
If Yes, how many years? _____
If you already have a degree, please specify: _____
3. Was the Honors program a reason for enrolling at this college? Yes _____ No _____
4. Did you participate in an Honors/Advanced Placement program in high school? Yes _____ No _____
5. Why did you enroll in this Honors course? _____

6. What are your goals for the course? _____

7. What is your educational objective for the next 2 years? _____

8. What is your long-term educational objective? _____

9. Are you presently employed? Full-time _____ Part-time _____ Not employed _____
What is the nature of your employment? _____
10. How many units are you enrolled in this semester? _____
11. How many units of college work have you completed? _____
12. How many Honors courses are you enrolled in this semester? _____
13. How did you hear about the Honors program? _____

GENDER:

Male _____
Female _____

AGE:

Under 18 _____ 23 _____
18 _____ 24 _____
19 _____ 25-29 _____
20 _____ 30-34 _____
21 _____ Over 34 _____
22 _____

ETHNICITY:

Amer.Indian _____
Asian _____
Black _____
Caucasian _____
Hispanic _____
Filipino _____
Other _____

GPA: _____

MAJOR: _____

Appendix A

Appendix B

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Comments to Question 5: "Why did you enroll in this Honors course?"

- . For personal growth.
- . Personal interest in the subject.
- . To test my abilities as a re-entry student.
- . For academic challenge.
- . To better my chances of transferring to a university.
- . The instructor.
- . Seminar structure.
- . Small class concept.
- . Opportunity for more intense study.
- . In the hope of being with other serious students rather than "SDSU refugees" looking for easy credits.
- . Because I am bored with regular classes, hope for smaller class with better students.
- . An Honors class looks good on a transcript.
- . Because it is in my major.
- . For the opportunity to improve my Spanish while learning about Mexican culture.
- . Because the course focused on the Chicano community.
- . To better understand how to utilize a computer in teaching pre-school children.
- . I am a teacher preparing to set up a computer lab in my school and I need some direction.
- . To experience a higher level of critique in the art field.
- . To concentrate on the principles of art so as to become "fluent" in their application.
- . To work with artists with abilities equal or superior to mine.
- . To have the opportunity to evaluate writing styles without compromising content or experimentation for a grade.
- . To research and develop ways of involving parents in preschool programs.
- . Because the instructor is well-known and liked.
- . To improve writing, research and analytical skills.

Appendix B

Appendix C

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Comments to Question 6: "What are your goals for the course?"

- . To gain a deeper understanding of Chicano culture and to improve usage of language.
- . To better understand the Vietnam War.
- . To come to grips with the Vietnam experience from an academic point of view as opposed to a direct view.
- . To become proficient in research.
- . To become aware of the computer as a teaching tool for pre-school children.
- . To better my writing, learn more about literature and to have a worthwhile class experience.
- . To learn more than I would in a regular class.
- . To learn more about the world of art.
- . To receive a good grade.
- . To create a parent guide for reading to children.
- . To gain a better understanding of children's books and selections.
- . To gain more experience in storytelling.
- . To clarify some of the ethical dilemmas we are having today.
- . To broaden my understanding of bioethics.
- . To sharpen my abilities in critical thinking.
- . To improve my communication skills through presentations.
- . To understand and analyze how economics, business and management are inter-related.
- . To develop a handbook for starting a restaurant business.
- . To solve job-related problems.
- . To gain further knowledge in the field of Psychology.
- . To gain a better understanding of psychosomatic diseases.
- . To get a good grade.
- . To gain a more in-depth knowledge of U.S. History.
- . To develop a technical, informative paper showing the benefits of participating in the State Fire Training Certification Program for the administration of my place of employment.

Appendix D

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY

1. In your opinion what specific characteristics made this Honors course different from other courses you have taken?

2. Did this Honors course require more class participation than regular courses? Yes No

Yes No

____ ____

3. Did this course meet your expectations?

____ ____

Why? _____

4. Did this Honors course require higher standards of performance from the students than what you have previously experienced at a community college? ____ ____

5. Do you feel the class size was adequate?

____ ____

If not, what would you recommend? _____

6. How would you describe the students level of involvement in this course?

____ Not involved

____ Moderately involved

____ Very involved

7. If you are taking more than one Honors course, did you find them to be approximately equivalent in terms of quality? _____

In terms of demand? _____

8. Do you have any comments about the grading procedures and tests?

9. Do you have any comments about the reading/writing assignments required for this course?

10. Do you think this course should be offered again? Please explain. _____

11. Would you recommend this course to other high-achieving students?

____ No

____ Yes, with reservations

____ Yes

____ Highly recommended

12. Are there other Honors courses you would like to see offered? Please specify.

13. Do you have any additional comments/suggestions? _____

GENDER:

Male _____
Female _____

AGE:

Under 18 _____ 23 _____
18 _____ 24 _____
19 _____ 25-29 _____
20 _____ 30-34 _____
21 _____ Over 34 _____
22 _____

ETHNICITY:

Amer.Indian _____
Asian _____
Black _____
Caucasian _____
Hispanic _____
Filipino _____
Other _____

CUMULATIVE

GPA: _____

UNITS COMPLETED: _____

MAJOR: _____

Appendix D

Appendix E

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY

Comments to Question 9: "Do you have any comments about the reading/writing assignments required for this course?"

- . The assignments were irrelevant.
- . Writing assignments were often confusing and unclear.
- . Topics should have been chosen by the students, not the instructor.
- . I enjoyed the assignments and the originality of concepts for the essay topics.
- . The assignments made the course superior to an ordinary English class.
- . More time should be allowed to read the assigned material; clearer explanations are needed.
- . I enjoyed the art movies and exhibits.
- . Assignments were extensive but I had expected it since it was an Honors class.
- . Assignments were varied, interesting and stimulating.
- . A greater variety of points of view about the Vietnam War could be presented.
- . Thorough presentation of the subject using books, films and papers.
- . The term paper enhanced my comprehension of the subject.
- . Change the textbook.
- . Software evaluations could be expanded.
- . Keeping a journal was very valuable and it is a habit I will keep beyond this class.
- . Everything was perfect.
- . Adequate, challenging and rewarding.
- . Required advanced reading and writing skills.
- . Made the difference between an Honors course and a regular class.
- . The assignments gave me a chance to learn and refine research techniques.
- . I appreciated the chance to write on a topic I selected.
- . I learned as much listening to other students discussing their topics as I did working on mine.
- . Assignments were a major challenge requiring research and materials not readily available.
- . More reading is needed.
- . The textbook was excellent.
- . The books were very good and adequate for the course.
- . I was led to believe that there would be a great deal of reading and writing. I was not disappointed.

Appendix E

Appendix F

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY

Comments to Question 10: "Do you think this course should be offered again?"

- . There is a need for an increased understanding and appreciation of the Chicano/Mexican culture in the community.
- . A chance for serious Spanish students to really excel.
- . Definitely, since the subject material of this course is not available anywhere else and that it is critical to understanding the current situation in the American Southwest.
- . Because the border is so close to San Diego and because the Chicano/Mexican community is growing, it is important that we learn about this dynamic situation.
- . The instructor did a great job, however I feel that if the class were open to other students, more interesting discussions would be generated.
- . Yes, because the Vietnam War is still a force in American politics today and the American History curriculum lacks in survey courses.
- . Yes, the word will get around about the high quality of this essential course.
- . This is a class a History lover would find interesting and challenging.
- . Yes, because the American public is mostly ignorant of the facts surrounding the Vietnam War. This class should be offered to all students. If it is not, the SDCCD is depriving students of knowledge of a period in United States history that changed policy, with respect to the military, and changed the government as a whole.
- . The instructor did a very fine job and I recommend him highly for this course.
- . The course gives the student an opportunity to experiment with a computer as an educational tool.
- . I found the information valuable in a computer-oriented world.
- . Yes, I found the course to be a tremendous benefit in working with children at a computer.
- . The course offers an opportunity for serious art students to enter the professional world of art. It brings out the best in a student.
- . By not defining limitations in this course, the student is free to set his/her own limits.
- . It was great to have more than one medium or discipline involved. It gave the student a sense of freedom.
- . The class gave me more confidence in myself as an artist and opened up new directions. Other artists should be given the same opportunity to discover their potential.

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY (cont)

Comments to Question 10: "Do you think this course should be offered again?" (cont)

- . Sure, there should always be room for change. I am confident that as the Honors Program develops, many good things will come out of it.
- . The English class should be taught from an English class perspective, not from an Art perspective.
- . No, never! At least not with the same instructor.
- . Yes, the course allows more creativity for the more advanced student.
- . I believe this course is beneficial as a mean of improving writing skills, but also as a source of personal enlightenment in the arts and aspects of writing not usually covered in a regular English class.
- . Yes, it gives the student a chance to learn about child development activities.
- . Yes, the course is great for those interested in children's literature.
- . Yes, I've learned so much about what types of books to use with preschoolers. It was very helpful since I am a teacher.
- . Yes, the course promotes awareness and involvement of individuals in technical, social, and ethical issues.
- . Yes, the course deals with a subject that is usually overlooked in other classes.
- . Yes, the course gives students a chance to express themselves.
- . Yes, the course allows for a more independent and broader view of business and economics.
- . Yes, because the instructor gets very involved with the students.
- . Yes, but each semester a different aspect of business should be covered.
- . Yes, because it offered practical experience.
- . Yes, the course is good preparation for upper-division work.
- . The concept of the Honors Program is great. It facilitates the transfer process to a 4-year institution, and the information offered is valuable to the student majoring in Business.
- . Yes, the course is an interesting alternative to History 109.
- . Yes, the course is good preparation for the students who plan on transferring to a 4-year college.
- . Yes, the course would also benefit students majoring in closely-related subjects.
- . Yes, a student would never get the same benefits from a regular class.
- . Yes, it is an excellent subject and very well taught.

Appendix F

HONORS PROGRAM STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY (cont)

Comments to Question 10: "Do you think this course should be offered again?" (cont)

- . Yes, the class gives the student a better understanding of the bio-psychosocial model, stress reduction and a terrific understanding of behavioral models.
- . Yes, many students would enjoy an opportunity to work independently on a subject of personal interest.

Appendix F

Appendix G

HONORS PROGRAM FACULTY EVALUATION

College: _____

Course: _____

Instructor: _____

Telephone: _____

Enrollment 1st Day: _____

Number who withdrew: _____

Enrollment 1st Census: _____

Number who dropped: _____

Total: _____

1. Please indicate the number of students who received each grade/symbol.

A _____ B _____ C _____ D _____ F _____ W _____ I _____

2. How does this grade distribution compare with your regular courses?

Much Lower _____ Lower _____ Same _____ Higher _____ Considerably higher _____

3. Did you adjust your normal grading practices for this course? Yes _____ No _____

If so, please explain: _____

4. What method(s) was (were) used to teach this course? _____

5. Did these methods differ from your normal teaching methodology? Yes _____ No _____

If so, please explain: _____

6. How do the Honors students compare with your regular students?

Much Worse _____ Worse _____ No Difference _____ Better _____ Much Better _____

7. Do you feel the criteria for eligibility was appropriate? Yes _____ No _____

Any suggestions? _____

8. In what ways did the Honors students meet, fail to meet, or exceed your expectations?

9. Would you do anything differently next time you teach this course? _____

10. Please describe the requirements for this course (paper, tests, reports, etc.)

11. What is your overall impression of the Honors program? _____

12. Do you have any recommendations on how to improve the administration of the program?

Appendix H

HONORS PROGRAM FACULTY EVALUATION

The requirements listed below are from Question 10 of the Faculty Evaluation, which asks to "Please describe the requirements for this course (paper, tests, reports, etc.)."

COURSE

REQUIREMENTS

Biology 265:

Ethical Dilemmas & The Scientist

- . text books
- . discussion of various issues
- . research paper/discussions
- . each student to read preliminary papers in preparation for classmates presentation

Business 265:

Interdisciplinary Seminar

- . scheduled meetings
- . participation
- . oral presentation and defense of paper
- . written final report

Child Development 265:

Computers in Education

- . student journal
- . two school reports
- . software evaluations
- . lesson plans using the computer

Child Development 265:

Honors Internship:

Children's Literature

- . extensive off-campus work
- . test of knowledge of library services
- . on-the-job performance with teachers or children

English 101:

Reading and Composition

- . research paper with a weighted grade
- . several quizzes
- . oral report
- . final essay, also weighted

Fine Art 265:

Visual Art Design

- . weekly progress reports
- . experimental journal
- . development of high-quality art work
- . gallery installation and presentation

Appendix H

HONORS PROGRAM FACULTY EVALUATION (cont)

COURSE	REQUIREMENTS
Fire Science 265: Special Topics - Honors	. 15 - 20 page report on a Fire Science topic
History 109: History of the United States	. six papers . extensive analysis using primary sources rather than secondary sources
History 265: The United States in Vietnam	. extensive reading . participation in class discussions . analytical review essay . prepare and present a major research paper
Psychology 265: Health Psychology/Behavior Medicine	. active discussions befitting a seminar format . oral presentations . at least one of two research projects assigned . midterm and final
Spanish 265: Language and Culture of Mexican/American Origins	. 5 comprehensive exams . one oral presentation with visuals . one ten-page paper written in Spanish in a scholarly style

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Appendix H